

(This is part of a winning competition entry by Boris. I have reduced the original illustrations to A5 size. Ed. M.R.S.)

Unlike most other countries, Russian stamps were not perforated by commercial organisations for use on their own correspondence. However, Tsarist stamps, mainly high values, were 'perforated' in the period from 1911 to 1910.

It appears that around 1909, large quantities of mainly high value stamps appeared on the market. They seem to have come from the official archives of the Post Office and had previously been used on official receipts, money orders, COD parcels and for other post office fiscal uses. The post office practice at that time was to store these postal documents for a fixed period and then to destroy them if no enquiry had been made about them. Apparently, these postal documents, complete with their stamps, were being stolen, the postmarks, if any, removed and the stamps resold. To overcome this problem, the post office authorities decided to perforate all the stamps on the documents in their possession to prevent their re-use.

Not only were the usual standard perforators used, but examples may be found with large round, as well as triangular and irregular holes. Unlike other countries, the perfins were applied after use of the stamp. Where the normal perfins of private companies are found on Tsarist stamps, it is almost certain that they originated either in Finland, Poland or Turkey,

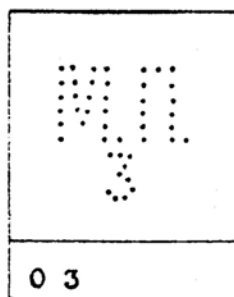
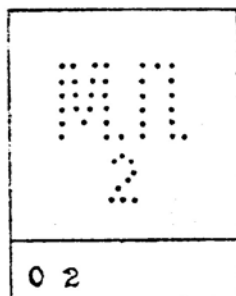
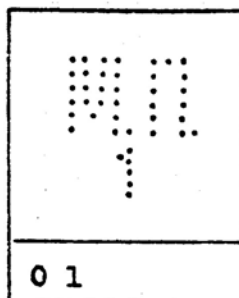
Shown are sheets with fiscal perfins of Moscow, Odessa and Tiflis, and examples of private perfins used outside Russia on Russian stamps.



official perfins.

RUSSIA.

Moscow
Post



ODESSA

